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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
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Agenda items 36, 37 and 87
QUESTION OF PALESTINE
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO
INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES
AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF
THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER
ARABS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Identical letters dated 26 June 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

In my capacity as Chairman of the Group of Arab States for the month of June 1998 and on behalf of the Arab States members of the League of Arab States, I have the honour to enclose herewith a statement issued on 25 June 1998 by the emergency meeting of the Council of the League of Arab States concerning the decision of the Government of Israel to expand the municipal borders of Jerusalem.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the fifty-second session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 36, 37 and 87, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mubarak Hussein RAHMTALLA
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Chairman of the Group of Arab States

ANNEX

Statement issued by the Council of the League of Arab States on 25 June 1998

At an extraordinary session requested by the States of Palestine and the Sudan, the Council of the League of Arab States considered the serious decision taken by the Israeli Cabinet on 21 June 1998 aimed at expanding the municipal borders of Jerusalem to include the surrounding settlements and extensive areas of West Bank territory. The effect of this decision will be to destroy the landmarks of Jerusalem and alter its status as a holy city for each of the divine religions. It will also strengthen the Israeli hold over the city, erase its Arab identity and change its character and the distribution of its population.

Recalling the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions on Jerusalem and the affirmed rights of the Palestinian people, and on the basis of the resolutions of the Arab Summit Conferences, in particular the Cairo Summit Conference of 1996, and the decisions of the Council of the League of Arab States, the Council strongly condemns this decision, which is blatant non-compliance with the terms of reference of the Madrid Peace Conference and all relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, particularly Security Council resolution 252 (1968), which considers the measures taken by Israel in connection with Jerusalem to be invalid and affirms that Jerusalem has special status and that the same applies to it as to the rest of the occupied Arab territories. The decision is also a clear violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and The Hague Convention of 1907, and constitutes a hostile act against and a challenge to international legitimacy. Furthermore, it entails overt racism and the illegal appropriation of land, as well as loss of the rights of Palestinian citizens in the occupied territories.

The Council calls upon the United States of America, as a co-sponsor of the peace process, to compel Israel to comply with the terms of reference of the Madrid Peace Conference. While commending the position of the Russian Federation in this respect, it calls upon the latter, as a co-sponsor of the peace process, and upon the European Union and all concerned parties, to adopt earnest and decisive positions concerning Israeli practices which disregard the rights and feelings of all Muslims and Christians worldwide.

The Council urges the United Nations, particularly the Security Council, to convene an emergency session to discuss this serious matter, which will have extremely grave repercussions on the entire peace process and risk destroying it altogether. Moreover, it will place the whole Middle East region in a highly dangerous situation.

The Council also expresses its full and unequivocal support for the decisive position adopted by the State of Palestine and for the steadfastness of the Palestinian Arab people in the occupied Arab territories. It also supports the Palestinian right to oppose both the Israeli occupation and Israel's expansionist ambitions, and the Palestinian peoples's determination to hold onto land and the Arab identity of Jerusalem.

The Council calls upon the Arab, Islamic and international communities to demonstrate greater solidarity and cohesion in confronting Israeli positions and addressing Israeli provocations. It further calls upon those communities to hold intensive consultations with a view to adopting appropriate positions that will safeguard Arab and national rights, and urges them to provide all forms of support to the steadfast Palestinian people.

Given the clear international consensus that the Israeli plan should be condemned and rejected, the Council expresses its appreciation of the positions adopted by the international community and regional groups, and requests their support for the Arab right to counter unjust Israeli provocations.

The Council, while considering this to be an open session, requests the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States to take the necessary measures and inform the Council of developments in the situation. It further requests him to contact the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Chairman of the Al-Quds (Jerusalem) Committee, the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, the Vatican and the members of the Security Council, particularly the permanent members, and to endeavour to ensure that the Arab States appropriately convey to international organizations and the members of the international community the dimensions of this serious Israeli decision and the intense anger which it has caused, the aim being to place pressure on Israel immediately to revoke the policy of the Judaicization of Jerusalem. This should be done in coordination with the ministers for foreign affairs of the Arab States, to whom a report should be submitted at their next meeting.